

REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected claim 13 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The limitation of "the interactive sign comprising a bonusing event" is not clearly defined in the specification. The specification appears to be silent with respect to what constitutes "a bonusing event". The specification appears to only state that "a or the" "bonusing event" occurs because of a trigger event. What is clearly defined is the interactive sign comprising a LCD screen where a player enters bonus play, pg 13, lines 2-3 of the instant specification.

Page 9, line 12-13 states that the bonus award is supplemental to the gaming world. Bonusing events are known by those of ordinary skill in the art as seen in the prior art patents including 5,876,824, 6,234,897, 6,217,448; 6,203,429, 6,059,289 and 6,033,307, 5,560,603, 5,823,874, 5,848,932, 6,142,873.

Page 9, lines 21-23 states that the gaming device has the correct mechanism to allow a player to upgrade the bonusing event from any of the gaming machines linked to the interactive sign. Page 9, lines 23 through page 10, line 3, states the user entitled to play a bonusing event receives a ticket or card from the gaming machine which allows the user to play the bonusing event on a separate gaming machine. Page 10, lines 6-8 states that the bonusing event occurs once a user on a particular gaming machine has won a particular prize amount on that gaming machine. Page 10, lines 18-21 state the bonus event can be a wheel with various monetary denominations. Page 10, lines 22-23 state that the bonusing event is an LCD screen where a player plays one on one with a casino dealer on the screen. Page 11, lines 1-2 states that the bonusing

event can be a ferris wheel that unloads coins. Page 13, lines 11-22 states that a user plays a gaming machine 10, for example a slot machine, a video poker, a video keno machine or a video bingo machine. If a user gets a certain response from the gaming machine such as three bonus event symbols or any other combination of symbols chosen by the operator of the gaming machine, the user is directed to play a bonusing event on an interactive sign. A bonusing event is played on an interactive sign as shown in Figs. 1-4 however, other interactive games can be also played on the interactive sign. The user can play the bonusing event on the gaming machine which they were originally playing, or the gaming machine can dispensed a card or ticket which allows the user to play a separate machine which is connected to the interactive sign.

Therefore claim 13 does comply with the written description requirement.

The Examiner has rejected claim 13 as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The limitation of "wherein players playing said linked gaming machines who enter said bonusing event compete against each other on said interactive sign" is non-enabled nor adequately described by the specification. The specification does not explain how the players would compete against each other. The specification appears to be enabling only for competition between a player on the gaming machine and the interactive sign, page 13, lines 2-3 of the instant specification.

The present invention teaches that multiple gaming machines are linked to an interactive sign. (Page 9, lines 15-16). Each gaming device has a mechanism allowing a player to operate the bonusing event from any of the gaming machines linked to the

interactive sign. (Page 9, lines 21-23). The present invention allows multiple players playing the linked gaming machine to enter the bonusing event and compete against each other. (Page 10, lines 6-11). One of the examples of the bonusing event is a card game versus a casino dealer as shown in Figure 3. (Page 10, lines 22-23). This is an example which teaches multiple players competing against each other and against a dealer. Further, the present invention teaches that the interactive sign can be a game board such as monopoly. Games can be any conventional game which a player plays according to game rules. When a player reaches the game board, they can either play against a computer or against other persons who have reached the bonusing event through other linked gaming machines. The interactive sign can then roll dice randomly on the screen moving the player around the board.

Based on this description found in the specification, which shows how the players compete against each other in the bonusing event on the interactive sign, claim 13 satisfies the enablement requirement.

The Examiner has rejected claim 13 as being obvious over Acres '567 and Stephan '277.

The Examiner states that Acres discloses, teaches and suggests a plurality of gaming machines (10) linked together, see fig. 2, connected to an interactive sign (42). As disclosed a bonusing computer (38) and animation computer (40) that can be considered part of the interactive sign as well. When a triggering event occurs a signal is sent through the network of gaming machines. The trigger event is the total number of coins played by the player. The triggering event initiates a secondary game and a

tertiary game, together deemed the bonus event, and half of this bonus event is common to the group of gaming machines; while the tertiary game is available to those players to play the largest amount of coins, thus there is competition between the players to play in order to reach the tertiary and win the bonus amounts given in both the secondary game and the tertiary. It is disclosed that the triggering event is the amount of coins played; however, it is silent as to what the games, the bonus event, constitute. Stefan discloses and teaches a gaming system where players compete against each other for the top prize; i.e., the highest ranked player wins the bonus money. As described by Stefan, players play linked gaming machines as fast as they can to achieve the highest payout per machine, this is the player competing against each other and portions of their bets pool the bonus payout. The gaming machines are disclosed as being linked together via a central computer. The interactive sign for Stefan is the portion of the video display at each gaming machine that shows the amount of the bonus. Because this is common to all gaming machines it is deemed to be an interactive sign, because the players are competing for winning the jackpot from their respective machines. Also, disclosed as a competition among the players is the players trying to achieve the highest ranking poker hand. The player that achieves the highest rank in either scenario described above wins the bonus payout. Furthermore, it would be obvious to have the bonus payout shown on one main display because this would permit visitors to see as well as the players the bonus payout accumulate during the competition time period and then see the winning player of the bonus payout. Thus, in an analogous device, Stefan, teaches and suggests that the bonus event can

be a competition among players to see who can play fastest. The players are ranked by the number of coins played per unit time and the player that plays the largest amount of total coins is the player with the highest rank and wins the bonus payout. Therefore, one skilled in the art would find it obvious to incorporate two disclosures and teachings together to form one linked gaming system which allows players to compete to win the bonus in order to a common secondary game, a part of the bonus event, shared with adjoining machines so that the element of competition among players is given and the enjoyment of spectators is enhanced to which is what Acres disclosed invention is trying to solve.

Claim 13 requires that the gaming machines are linked to the interactive sign, and that the interactive sign comprises a bonusing event. Players playing the linked gaming machines into the bonusing event compete against each other on the interactive sign.

Stefan relates to a plurality of gaming machines linked together and controlled by a central computer. A bonus system is incorporated into the play of the gaming machines and the central computer tracks the bonus system activity and makes the appropriate payouts. A portion of the coins wagered are allocated to a bonus payout. Each player plays his gaming machines for a fixed time period and the player with the highest payout during the time period wins the bonus jackpot.

Stefan does not state or teach anywhere that the bonusing event is played on an interactive sign. Although the examiner states that this would be obvious, there is nothing in Stefan or Acres to teach that is desirable or a problem to be solved. Further,

Claim 13 requires that the players compete against each other during the bonusing event on the interactive sign. Stefan teaches that the players play the gaming machine not a interactive sign for a fixed amount of time. Then the player with the highest payout wins a bonus. This is not what is taught in the claims of the present invention.

Acres solely teaches that with a series of linked gaming machines with a triggering event a single player is sent to a screen for playing a secondary game such as a wheel of fortune. There is nothing taught in either Stefan or Acres to play a secondary bonusing event on an interactive screen and for players to compete on the interactive screen. There is nothing taught to combine the references as Stefan teaches to play the game on the gaming machines and Acres teaches a triggering event for a player to be sent to a screen for a second game. Further, there is nothing taught and the Examiner does not show any reference to players compete on an interactive screen. Therefore claim 13 is not obvious over Acres in view of Stefan.

The Examiner has rejected claim 13 as being obvious over Demar, EP 981 119.

Demar discloses a gaming machine system (10) comprising at least two gaming machines (12a-12p) linked together, see figure 2 where it is disclosed the network setup with system controller (15), where said gaming machines (12a-12p) are linked to an interactive sign (20), see fig 2 where it is disclosed (20) is a centralized video display (20) and para [0041] where it is disclosed that the display (20) may comprise several display means" CRT, LCD, LED or electro-luminescent. Wherein Demar also discloses the interactive sign comprising a bonusing event, see figure 1 and para [0013] where it is disclosed the interactive sign (20) mirrors what is being displayed on local display

(14) which is used by a gaming machine (12) to display the bonus game to the player. Although, Demar does not expressly disclose the limitation “wherein players playing said linked gaming machines who enter said bonusing event compete against each other on said interactive sign” a reading of Demar can have this limitation inferred given human nature and a particular embodiment taught in paras [0031]-[0033]. The preferred embodiment of Demar discloses the interactive sign (20) and the controller (15) wait until one gaming machine (12) finishes playing its bonus round until another gaming machine (12), paras [0031-0032]. However, in an alternative embodiment as described in para [0033], a preemptive scheme can be used to preempt a current bonus game being displayed on sign (20) to another bonus game from another from another gaming machine (12) when an “award threshold” has been reached. It is presumed that most people are naturally competitive for attention. Because the objective of the disclosed invention in Demar is to attract attention, see para [0005], one of skill in the art understanding player’s psychology would find it obvious that by nature if the alternative embodiment was set up in a casino environment that players on the gaming machines (12) would naturally compete by trying to reach the award threshold level in order to have there particular bonus event displayed in the interactive sign (20).

Demar relates to providing a gaming system linked to a centralized display. The gaming system includes a plurality of gaming machines each having their own local display. The local display information may be obtained from a selected gaming machine operating in a bonus mode so that the centralized display shows a bonus game

corresponding to that shown on the local display. The system evaluates whether any gaming machines are operating in a preferred mode and communicates the display information to a centralized display. The processor is adapted to switch to operation in the feature mode if it identifies one of the gaming machines as entering the preferred mode. The bonus game is a secondary game shown on local displays which may be entered upon a favorable outcome in the basic game. A centralized video display or mechanical display may be used to display game activity from the local display of a designated gaming machine. The centralized mechanical display may thereby be used to mirror the bonus mode or basic mode shown on the local display of the gaming machine.

Claim 13 requires that the gaming machines are linked to an interactive sign wherein said interactive sign comprises a bonusing event. Demar describes that a centralized display may show what is happening on a particular gaming machine but the interactive sign is not the bonusing event. Further, although the Examiner states that it would be obvious to have participants participate against each other, in all the years of slot machine in gambling this has not been done. The present invention is the first idea which describes players competing against each other on a bonusing event on an interactive sign.

Further, new claim 22, is allowable based on the above reasoning.

Applicant now believes the application is in condition for allowance.


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